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**MASSACHUSETTS DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES
ANNOUNCES NEW REGULATIONS FOR 2003.**

At the February 6, 2003 monthly business meeting of the state's Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (MFC), new regulations were enacted affecting commercial lobster and scup fishing as well as the recreational weakfish fishery. These issues were discussed at February 3-4 public hearings and will be in effect on February 28, 2003.

1) Changes to commercial lobster regulations (322 CMR 6.01 & 6.33):

- Language was inserted into the current Massachusetts commercial lobster regulations that define the remaining commercial lobster regulations as mandated by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission for waters outside of Massachusetts' jurisdiction. This action is merely a compliance criteria with the fishing management plan and in no way should affect the commercial lobster fishery in Massachusetts.

2) Changes to commercial scup regulations (322 CMR 6.28):

- Winter period possession limits were established so as to remain in compliance with the Interstate Fishery Management Plan mandated by the ASMFC.
 - (a) Winter I Period (January through April). It is unlawful for commercial fishermen to land or possess more than 10,000 of scup during a 24-hour day, or more than 1,000 pounds of scup per day when the Director determines that 85 % of the federal approved commercial fishery quota has been reached.
 - (b) Winter II period (November through December) It is unlawful for commercial fishermen to land or possess more than 1,500 of scup during a 24-hour day.

3) Changes to recreational weakfish regulations (322 CMR 8.06):

- The recreational bag limit for weakfish as lowered from 12 to 10 fish to comply with the ASMFC Interstate Fishery Management Plan.

No actions were taken on the remaining items related to recreational lobster, scallops, tautog, black sea bass, trap tags and cod that were also discussed at the public hearings.

For more information please contact *Marine Fisheries* at 617.626.1520
or visit our website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.